



# Conglomerate

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## • Upcoming Shows

For the latest information, check out the web site of the Eastern Federation of Mineral and Lapidary Societies: <http://www.amfed.org/efmls>.

### FEBRUARY

**SUN., 22:** Octahedron Minerals Annual Home Show, 12:30-4 p.m., 1106 Gypsy Lane West, one mile east of Dulaney Valley Rd. Specimens from Larry Krause collection and estate of geologist Lisa Grimminger.

### MARCH

**7-8:** The Delaware Mineralogical Society, Inc.'s 46th Annual Earth Science Gem and Mineral Show, at Delaware Technical and Community College (I-95 Exit 4B, Churchmans Road, Newark) Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. & Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission \$5, \$4 seniors, \$3 children 12-16; under 12 free if with an adult. Visit [www.delministry.net](http://www.delministry.net) or contact [gene@fossilnut.com](mailto:gene@fossilnut.com).

**21-22:** 45th annual show of The Gem, Lapidary & Mineral Society of Montgomery Co., Md.; Montgomery Co. Fairgrounds, Gaithersburg; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$6, children under 12 free; exhibits, demonstrations, workshops, over 20 dealers; contact George Durland, (301) 299-8213; e-mail: [GDurland1@verizon.net](mailto:GDurland1@verizon.net); Web site: [www.glmsmc.com](http://www.glmsmc.com).

## January BMS Meeting: WED., JAN. 21

The next meeting of BMS will be held Wednesday, January 21st, 2009 at the Cockeysville Public Library Meeting room. The program will be a Rock Sale and Swap. BMS members are invited to bring mineral specimens to sell or swap. Other clubs and the public are invited to attend, but only BMS members may sell. It is club policy that members selling a specimen at a BMS meeting should contribute 15% of the sale to the club. Please keep track of sales and give the club contribution to the treasurer.

Note that all rocks must be carried through the library, so please exercise courtesy to library patrons and to library staff.

A wide selection of books will also be offered for sale at the meeting.

Doors open at 6:30, and a very short business meeting will be held at 7:15. We must leave the room by 8:45, so plan ahead to remove your minerals by that time. We cannot over stay or welcome.

## Mineral Collection at Elizabethtown College

Long-time mineral collector Frank Masters of Harrisburg, PA has donated half of his extensive collection to become the Masters Mineral Gallery at Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, PA.

Masters, 82, is now retired from a career as a civil engineer. He became interested in minerals as a child when his mother took him to visit the Cornwall Iron Mines in nearby Lebanon County, PA. He began collecting seriously in 1980 and his collecting has taken him all over the world from nearby sites to South Australia.

The mineral gallery contains over 200 specimens, valued at \$125,000, arranged by John S. White, and is displayed on the ground floor of the Masters Center for Science, Mathematics and Engineering. The gallery is open to the public Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 5 pm. Masters Center is located on College Avenue, Elizabethtown, PA. Visitor parking is available in the lot just past the building.

## Removing Clay from Mineral Specimens

Dirt is dirt, but clay is trouble. It is sticky when wet and hard when dry. In a past issue of *The Collecting Bag*, Betsy Martin explains how to clean rock. Her much longer article is condensed here.

Betsy begins by reminding collectors that some minerals are water soluble and that some fluffy minerals or delicate coatings can't survive the mechanical stress of washing. If it is safe to clean the mineral, pick off as much clay as possible before you start.

1. Let clay dry out *completely*. Rubbing or scrubbing wet clay will just pack it down tighter.
2. Work outdoors. It's messy.
3. Always use cold water. Hot or warm water will make the clay even more sticky.
4. Add a tablespoon of liquid Calgon to the cold cleaning water. The water should feel slippery. If you must use powdered Calgon, dissolve it in a cup of hot water first and then add the hot water to your cold cleaning water.

## *I Came, I Saw and I Spent too Much!!!*

Being in the Holiday Spirit and wanting to share my passion for minerals with my family, on Dec. 13 I went to the Fall Festival of Fine Minerals, Fossils and Jewelry at Damon's Grill in Hunt Valley to look for some presents.

There was a nice crowd looking at and buying specimens. I spent most of my time with Larry and Alice of Octahedron Minerals. After talking with Larry for a little bit about collecting, I purchased nice specimens of Apatite, Fluorite and Celestite, as well as some display boxes. Then, after thinking I was done, I saw a very nice specimen of Fluorite from China and a beautifully colored Cavansite on Stilbite specimen from India, which will probably be a gift to myself! It was very nice to see many kids with their parents looking at the collections. If you have kids in your family and you want to get them interested in Rocks and Minerals, this show is a good way to do it.

Afterwards, as you walked out poor but happy, you could look at the outcropping of rock behind Hunt Valley Mall and go looking for Garnets!

—Bradley Grant

### **Baltimore Mineral Society**

Mike Seeds, *president*, 717-285-3745; Al Pribula, *vice president*; Bob Hudgins, *treasurer*; Carolyn Weinberger, *secretary*; Larry Krause, *newsletter*, 410/828-0024.

E-mail news or questions to:  
mseeds@fandm.edu or  
managingeditor@verizon.net  
Write c/o 1106 Gypsy Lane West  
Baltimore, MD 21286.

### FIELD TRIP INFO:

E-mail Edmund.A.Goldberg@usdoj.gov to learn about upcoming mineral field trips.

5. Put the minerals in the cleaning solution for 10 to 20 minutes or until the clay has begun to absorb the liquid. Some of the clay will fall apart at this stage.

6. Rinse the rocks in cold, clean water and dispose of the muddy slurry. Repeat steps 5 and 6 as necessary.

7. Betsy recommends a final rinse in Calgon, a small amount of ammonia in water, or Windex (presumably the type with ammonia) to get off the last of the clay. Rinse again and drain.

8. Dry the minerals on newspapers and then pick out remaining clay bits and rinse again as necessary.

9. A final cleaning in an ultrasonic cleaner filled with Windex will finish the surface. Rinse in clear water.

## **The Rock Dump: News & Notes about Minerals**

- **Don't forget to renew your BMS membership!**

- **Ed Goldberg** and **Phil Greenberg** returned to their quest for the lost Piemontite site in Adams County, PA. **Deborah Slawson** was going to join them but couldn't make it. **Jay Lininger** mentioned the site in *Matrix*, but it has never been identified. They explored a number of possible sites, but didn't strike pay dirt. Later they stopped at another site to collect, and came home with some rocks. Ed says, "The metarhyolite I found still has nice little bits of native copper, a few epidote pockets, and traces of cuprite as well as malachite." Their best find was a day of fresh air and sunshine.

- **Save your pennies!** The January meeting will also include a significant number of geology and mineralogy books for sale.

- When I mounted a piece of Clinosafflorite from a place in Sweden called Finnshytteberg, I asked my friend **Dana Backman** to translate. He knows Swedish. He reports: "The closest word to *skytte*, which would be pronounced in Swedish as if the 'sk' was an 'shk' sound, means 'shooting,' the noun form of *skjuta*, meaning 'to shoot'. *Berg* means mountain, so your mineral's place name translates approximately as: "The Mountain where We Shot Finns (and cleaned and ate them, probably)." They're Vikings, you know.

- The Lone Collector, Ed Goldberg, returned to his secret ore pile in the woods, where he reports he "found a nice lump of grossan containing some nice crystals of garnet, magnetite and some traces of olivine. I want to find a specimen that has nicely formed olivine."

- Just so you will know, in all of the episodes of "Star Trek"—TV, Movies, and animated—144 minerals are mentioned, of which 34 are known on Earth. The list includes Dilithium, Coal, Transparent Aluminum, Latinum, and Trogtalite. Of those, only Coal and Trogtalite are real. See "The Mineralogy of Star Trek" by Jeffrey de Fourestier in *Min Rec*, Vol. 1 #3 2005.

- Whether you collect micros or macros, you should look at material called hobby foam down at the craft store. It is sold in sheets and can be cut with a razor knife. It comes in different thicknesses, but for minerals a thickness of at least an eighth of an inch is probably best. You could cut a rectangle a few inches across as a base on which to display a nice mineral, or you could cut a small column on which to glue a micromount. The foam can be purchased in many different colors or colored with paint or a marker. Some rocks deserve to be on a pedestal, and you can make your own for a few pennies.

—Mike Seeds

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## **BMS MEETINGS:**

**3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 P.M. Cockeysville Public Library except Oct. (Micromount Symposium); December (BMS holiday party), May (BMS annual BBQ) & August**

### Other Local Clubs

#### Chesapeake Gem And Mineral Society, Inc.

(<http://chesapeake.rockclub.us>) meets the 2nd Friday of each month except August at 7:30 P.M. Women's Club of Catonsville, St. Timothy's Lane & Old Frederick Rd; Catonsville, MD.

#### Gem Cutters Guild of Baltimore, Inc.

(<http://www.gemcuttersguild.com>) meets the 1st Tuesday of each month except January, July and August at 7:30 P.M. at Meadow Mill at Woodberry, 3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Suite 116; Baltimore, MD

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### It's time to renew your BMS Membership!

**Individual memberships \$10; family memberships \$15. Send payment along with your name, list of family members, address, phone and e-mail to: Bob Hudgins, 6713 Balmoral Overlook, New Market, MD 21774. Or: renew at the next BMS meeting!**

## Reprinted from a 1956 BMS Newsletter: The Dyer Quarry

The selected site for the field trip of the sixth annual convention of the Eastern Federation of the Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies on Sunday, Sept. 30 [1956], will be the A. A. Dyer Stone Company quarry. While the quarry has sometimes been called the Nicodemus quarry, it is referred to in "Minerals of Maryland" as the Dyer Quarry.

This large opening is located about one mile west of Delight on the Reisterstown road (U. S. 140) and a short distance south of Nicodemus Road. The quarry marks the northern extremities of the largest serpentine area in Baltimore County. It stretches from Liberty Road on the south to Reisterstown Road on the North. The area varies in width from one quarter mile to about three miles. From tip to tip it is approximately six miles.

While the Dyer quarry has never been a prolific producer of mineral specimens, it is quite interesting. The present quarry now marks the site of one shaft of the old Calhoun Chrome Mine. It is interesting as an occurrence of Garnierite. To my knowledge, this was the only find of a nickel mineral in any of the Maryland serpentines.

This serpentine area is typical of local serpentine barrens. The name barren is appropriate because the thin rocky soils allow only meager plant growth. The contrast between these areas of desolation and the lush Maryland countryside surrounding them is startling.

Serpentinized peridotite is intruded into the Wissahickon oligoclase-mica schist one mile west of Delight. This intrusion continues southward through the Soldiers Delight hills to Harrisonville.

The entire area is dotted with many mine shafts and test pits. Among these are the Choate, Weir, Harris and Calhoun. Several streams have been worked for chrome sand. Most of the miles were opened in the late 1860s and were again worked prior to the first World War.

Quite understandably, serpentine and its varieties are the common minerals to be found here. Picrolite in translucent masses, williamsite and antigorite would be suitable for the lapidarist. Baltimorite, a local variety of picrolite, is found here. Large veins of deweylite and magnesite cross the face of the quarry walls. The deweylite fluoresces a pale cream color under long wave ultraviolet radiation. Occurring in the quarry and in the surrounding barren are found chalcedony, common white opal, jasper and moss agate. About 1940 a large vein of dolomite was uncovered. Dolomite rhombs up to six inches were collected. The hydrated silicate of nickel and magnesium (garnierite) was found about this time associated with the dolomite and masses of magnetite. Calcite and drusy quartz have also been found. Chromite specimens may be collected at any of the chrome mines. Those having time to wander over this strange country may find it interesting.

—Harold Levey

### Write for "The Conglomerate"!

**Have you been collecting lately? Bought a nice mineral? Read a good book about minerals?** Everyone would enjoy hearing about your mineral adventures! Send your observations to *The Conglomerate* for everyone to share. Articles can be one paragraph long to two or three pages. Not a writer? Send your information to Editors Larry Krause and Alice Cherbonnier <[octahedron1@mac.com](mailto:octahedron1@mac.com)> or to Mike Seeds <[mseeds@fandm.edu](mailto:mseeds@fandm.edu)> for a quick rewrite. Don't have email? Hand in your submissions at a meeting or by snail mail.

*Hematite? Tourmaline?  
Sphalerite? Azurite?  
Malachite? Cuprite?  
Minerals from the "copper  
belt" where this mine is  
located are varied and a lit-  
tle mysterious.*